

PUBLIC OPINION.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE PUBLIC OPINION COMPANY.

VOL. VII.

WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK, SATURDAY AUGUST 10, 1889.

No. 18.

*A comprehensive index is furnished free to every subscriber at the end of each volume. The great value of PUBLIC OPINION is thereby enhanced, as when the numbers are preserved and bound, the volumes form the only existing encyclopedias of current thought and opinion.

*The aim of this journal is not to create but to reflect public opinion. The utmost care is taken to treat each question upon which extracts are given in a perfectly fair, non-partisan and unbiased manner. Absolute neutrality may therefore be relied upon in these columns.

*In no case do the editors assume to determine the politics of any paper from which extracts are made. The political credits are taken from the publisher's own statements, so far as they appear in the leading newspaper directories.

CONTENTS.

POLITICAL.	RELIGIOUS.
The Civil-Service Law..... 365	Will Reason Exterminate Christianity?..... 377
The Saloon in Politics..... 368	The Christian Life of the Man in the World..... 377
FOREIGN AFFAIRS.	Fishing for Souls..... 377
The Emperor of Germany in England..... 369	Missionary Women..... 378
The Alaska Seal Fisheries..... 369	A Season of Prayer..... 378
The Nicaragua Canal..... 370	EDUCATIONAL.
Parnellism and Crime..... 370	Education..... 379
The Irish Farms..... 370	Educational Statistics..... 379
"A Nile Slaughter Pen"..... 371	FINANCE AND COMMERCE.
A Crisis in Crete..... 371	Agricultural Experiment Stations..... 379
Evils of Unrestricted Immigration..... 371	A Railway Trust..... 379
SOCIOLOGICAL.	The Business Situation..... 380
Honor Among Americans..... 372	A Possible Revolution..... 380
Education and Fanatics..... 372	Limit to Railway Speed..... 380
Government of the Family..... 373	ART.
Women and Colleges..... 373	Our Artists at Paris..... 381
Henry George's System..... 373	A Novelist's Ideas of Art..... 381
When People Think..... 373	LITERARY.
MISCELLANEOUS.	The Abuse of Fiction..... 381
Scientific Charity..... 374	Libraries Under the Sands..... 382
The Community and the Man..... 374	Book Burnings..... 382
The Growth of Refinement..... 374	Book Reviews..... 383
Plant Worship..... 375	Briefer Notices..... 383
SCIENTIFIC.	Latest Publications..... 384
The Age of Steel..... 375	The Week..... 384
Micro-Organisms and Disease..... 376	
Modern Diseases..... 376	
The Alchemist's Dream..... 376	

POLITICAL.

THE CIVIL-SERVICE LAW.

VARIOUS PRESS OPINIONS.

Harper's Weekly (Ind.), August 10.

It is the changes in the civil service which will be the only practical issue in the fall elections. That "the spirit and purpose of the reform should be observed in all executive appointments" was the pledge under which the administration came into power. That it has been flagrantly violated can not be denied. The abuse of political removals has been very much greater than for many years—we believe greater than since the Lincoln administration. Senator Plumb, of Kansas, for instance, says there have been four times as many changes made in the post-offices in Kansas by President Harrison as were made by Cleveland in the same length of time. "In my county there is not a Democratic postmaster remaining." There was never a grosser, more deliberate, or more contemptuous violation of pledges solemnly given to the country than the course of the administration in regard to the civil service. The President, indeed, has appointed an admirable Civil-Service Commission, but the commission has no power whatever over removals and appointments. Mr. Roosevelt is an honorable, energetic, and efficient friend of reform, who says and believes that the removal of a good officer because he is a Democrat is a violation of the spirit of the law. But he can not prevent a single removal. Mr. Clarkson is a frank and active enemy of reform, and he turns out postmasters at the rate sometimes of a thousand a week. The President approves amendments of the rules recommended by the commission. But the President also permits, and therefore sanctions, the performances of Mr. Clarkson, which totally discredit his assertion that "only the interests of the public service should suggest removals from office." On the 25th of May, Mr. Bonaparte, president of the Maryland Civil-Service Reform Association, and, we believe, a Republican, said in his annual address:

It is not harsh criticism to say that during the past three months General Harrison has already so failed to observe it [the principle of reform] that if he were the agent of any prudent private employer he would be removed from his place.

This is the only National issue which can affect in any degree the autumn elections. All that is evident is that the enthusiasm of Republican friends of reform can not have been aroused by the course of the administration.

Washington Post (Ind.), August 5.

At present this country affords the singular spectacle of a system dominating the administration of public affairs which is not really approved by either of the two political parties, and which most of the leaders on both sides have expressly and unequivocally repudiated. It is comparatively easy to see how a vague phrase favoring the "reform" might creep into a party platform. It is not impossible to understand how, in certain panicky conditions not wholly unknown to Congress, a permissive act of a backboneless and evasive sort, should have been passed by way of experiment. But it is hard to understand the tame acquiescence with which the country endures the pretentious humbug which empowers the triumvirate commission to bestride the land like a colossus and to brood over the leading custom-houses and post-offices like a nameless terror. The "reformers" commence by inveighing against the "machine" in politics, and, to destroy that, they have created a greater "machine," which operates with the secrecy of the star chamber and in the spirit of the Inquisition. The whole thing accomplishes no good, and if the joint high commission were to take a protracted rest the people would nowhere miss their work. Despite the fact that the lists now contain the names of past candidates enough in all to supply the demands of the departments for years to come, yet the examination mill will continue to grind, probably because its shutting down would throw some one out of a job. Messrs. Lyman, Thompson, and Roosevelt will continue making excursions of inspection, taking testimony and drawing up reports. But the costly machinery serves no public interest, and it is because the end secured does not justify the means employed; in short, because the game is not worth the candle, that the *Post* is opposed to the law and its present administration. The law should be repealed or amended to some degree of practical utility. What kind of law would be beneficial is a question to be hereafter discussed, and when that discussion comes on the *Post* will have its say. But this much may be said now. It will be a law that, on the one hand will prove helpful to the service, and that, on the other, will have no tendency to the creation of a class of non-political citizens, a course at once repugnant to American sentiment and at variance with republican usage.

New York World (Dem.), August 5.

ALL this bluster of hungry politicians with the courage of their appetite the Republican party will not repeal the reform act. And it will do so for the simple reason that it dare not. A Democratic spoils organ encourages the Republicans to take this action, saying that "the civil-service law was passed as a joke." There was never a party less in a mood for joking than the Republican party in Congress was when it took up and hurriedly passed—as the devil when sick protested that he would be a monk—the civil-service reform bill introduced and championed in the upper house by the Democratic Senator Pendleton. After pledging itself repeatedly to reform the civil service and to reduce the taxes, the Republicans "joked" with both subjects and adjourned the regular session of Congress without acting upon either. Speaker Kelfer defiantly practiced what these men now preach, and Jay Hubbell openly levied partisan blackmail on office-holders to make up the Republican corruption fund. In the fall elections the people rose up and smote the Republican party hip and thigh. Smarting under the whiplash of popular displeasure, and fearful of their future, the spoilsmen and surplus-spenders scurried back to Washington for the short session and passed both the reform bill and an act ostensibly reducing the taxes. Since that day no party has dared seriously to propose a repeal of the law, and the Republican spoilsmen will not do it now. It started a revolution that will not move backward.

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (Rep.), August 3.

If further progress is to be made in civil-service reform it devolves upon the executive department of the Government to ordain such progress; and it will do this only so fast and so far as it believes itself to be sustained by public sentiment. Criticism upon the President is, therefore, ill-founded upon action which he may take that is not inconsistent with the letter of the law. The changes that have been made of postmasters, custom and internal revenue collectors, ambassadors, and consuls, marshals, district attorneys, etc., are not inconsistent with the provisions of law. In most instances, indeed, they have been for the good of the public service, and thus are abundantly justified in statesmanship, as well as in politics. The civil-service regulations apply almost exclusively to forces merely

projectile will penetrate 35 inches of iron at 1,000 yards range.—*London Quarterly Review for July.*

MICRO-ORGANISMS AND DISEASE.—There is so much of popular talk as to the germ-origin of disease, that it seems quite necessary that any real doctrine as to it should be stated and that popular errors should be corrected. The so-called germ theory of disease has undergone many mutations. From the earliest discovery that anthrax, a disease common among animals, could be transmitted by a low form of vegetable life, it was by many contended that all the communicable diseases were caused by such a germ. After a time it became apparent that in most of these diseases such a germ at least eluded discovery; also, that all germs found are not pathogenic or disease-breeding, but, on the contrary, many of them are essential to the processes of natural life. So in rooting out the tares we may also root out the wheat. Another fact quite lost sight of at first is that there must be a congenial soil which is itself a result of morbid processes, so that the occurrence of the disease did not depend solely on a germ. So here was a cause as real as the other could be claimed to be. Whatever may be the importance of the discovery of these minute forms of fungoid or algoid life in disease, it is even more important to know what are the methods of preserving the human system in a state incompatible with their presence. The field of inquiry in both directions is a far broader one than most of the people recognize. There are so many outlying facts or inquiries and so many conflicting observations that far less is settled than is generally supposed. Some contend that a discovery of their presence is important as aiding in the diagnosis of the disease, but that they are concomitant and not causes, arriving or developing when a particular stage of a morbid process is reached. Those who speak of them as causes greatly differ among themselves as to their mode of action. Thus Ballinger and others claim that the bacilli deoxidize the blood and so kill by what may be called air starvation. Then there is the mechanical theory which claims that the plant finding a congenial soil multiplies so rapidly as to clog the blood paths both in the minute general circulation and in the capillary circulation of organs. So the functions of life are mechanically interfered with and sickness or death results. Another claim is that these germs or microphytes feed on the protoids of the body so necessary to its nutrition, and so, depriving it of its natural pabulum, starve it to death or greatly derange its functions. Also, it has been claimed that the bacteria destroy the blood corpuscles, or interfere with their production. Then we have the chemical theory of their action; one phase of which is now especially in fashion. One form of this chemical theory is that the micro-organisms themselves are poisonous. We call them pathogenic. Another claim, well supported by the eminent naturalist Dr. Bary, of Strasburg, is that they produce a ferment which by its action on organs causes serious derangement or death. The theory now especially in vogue is not that they produce a poison directly, but by splitting up complex compounds in the body. Hence of late we have been hearing so much about ptomaines, or the poisons produced in the putrefaction of organic matter, and leucomaines or those basic substances formed in animal tissue during normal life, either as products of fermentative change or of retrograde metamorphose. With all these doctrines among those who accept the micro-organism as causes, and then with the doctrines of those who recognize their action and presence, but attach more importance to the causes of morbidity pre-existent before their arrival and on which their coming or their production depends, it is easy to see that we are in a great globe of inquiry, and that there is probably much truth yet to break forth. But the very activity of inquiry and the increasing competency of observers, both biological and clinical, are the assurance that the investigations will be thorough. Already they have led to very valuable results in our dealing with some diseases. Disinfection is applied with more intelligence, and far more care is taken to avoid the drying of sputa and its dissemination through the air. Also much greater care is taken of all the excreta of the body, and especially in times of sickness. It is also recognized that polluted ground and polluted liquids must be attended to. The cleanliness of all surroundings and the isolation of all communicable disease are now accepted doctrine among the practitioners of medicine and sanitation. It is recognized that there has been a steady advance in our control over these diseases, and with many failures there are yet strong grounds of hope for a more radical control.—*New York Independent.*

MODERN DISEASES.—It is a fact beyond dispute that the man of the present day is stronger, healthier, and less liable to attacks of disease, than in any preceding age. There are no more real diseases than there were a hundred years ago, but, with our increasing knowledge, we are able to observe differences not then noted, and to separate into distinct diseases, each requiring different treatment, certain affections which were formerly grouped together under one general name. Pneumonia, for instance, was rarely heard of in former times, but "lung fever" was none the less fatal, and even more to be dreaded in the absence of any rational method of treatment. Before the general use of the microscope and chemical reagents for testing the urine, diabetes, Bright's disease, and many others were not thoroughly differentiated, but were called by the general name of kidney trouble, and were just as common as in these modern times when "safe" and infallible cures are advertised for sale at every drug store. The forms of brain disease accompanied by paralysis were in existence long before the term paresis was introduced into the medical vocabulary, and the victim of alcoholic dementia is not favored with the sight of any more zoological curiosities than his predecessor who

merely had the common jim-jams. "Heart failure" is the latest term of this sort employed to indicate the cause of death, and is a most unfortunate one. It really has no meaning at all, for the failure of the heart to do its work always occurs at the end of life. It may be said that death is always caused by the failure of either the heart or lungs to perform their duties, and that the various forms of accidents or disease are only indirect causes, inducing such failure. Heart failure is not a disease, but the result of disease, and there is nothing new about it whatever. When applied to organic or functional diseases of the heart it may have some significance, but such a general term had best be used only in a very general sense. Notwithstanding the walls of the pessimists mankind are steadily improving in bodily strength and vigor. Even the immense consumption of patent medicines fails to stop the improvement—a fact which goes to prove the general absence of any medicinal qualities whatever, in these preparations. The average length of life is greater, and the standard of bodily health higher than ever before, and, if it were not that medical and sanitary skill now preserves for a life of imperfect health, many weak persons who in former times would have succumbed to the first attack of disease, the standard would be even higher. In the works of old writers there are many passages which show that a man was considered old and past his prime at forty, while now at that age one is in the very height of his powers. There may be more diseases now than formerly, but there is less disease, and a vastly greater knowledge of how to avoid it, or, when attacked, to bring it to a favorable termination.—*Popular Science News for August.*

THE ALCHEMIST'S DREAM.—The discovery of an elixir vitæ by Dr. Brown-Sequard, of Paris, when first announced, caused a smile of derision to spread over the faces of a majority of the medical scientists. Among the first to call names was Dr. William A. Hammond, ex-surgeon-general of the United States. This was not strange, because Dr. Hammond has heretofore advanced a theory of his own concerning the prolongation of life, based on entirely different grounds. He has held that, with proper attention to physical and mental needs, there was no physiological reason why man should die. But after experimenting on the lines given by the eminent French doctor, he takes back all his previous harsh words and agrees with him, heart and soul. In his experiments, Dr. Brown-Sequard used the organs of a guinea pig, from which, after pounding in distilled water, he filtered his elixir of life. Dr. Hammond used those of a lamb. The result in both cases was the same. Decrepit persons were revived. A rheumatic recovered the use of a nerveless limb. Experiments with this Frenchman's discovery are being made right and left, and in every case with apparent success. The liquid has been injected into the subjects without their knowledge as to what it was, so imagination does not enter into the result. Whether the benefit derived from these injections with this wonderful, though simple fluid, will be lasting or not, will only be gathered as time goes by.—*Boston Transcript.*

NOTES.

It is reported that foreign scientists have discovered minute diamonds in meteorites found in Siberia.

Trichina in muscle can be detected, according to Dr. Clore, a Spanish practitioner, by placing thin slices of the suspected meat in a test tube with pepsine, water, and a little hydrochloric acid. After a few hours' digestion in a warm place the parasite will become so loose and prominent that it can easily be picked out with a needle and identified under the microscope.

Erlenmeyer says that children born of women addicted to the morphine habit are practically morphine-eaters from birth. During the first few days of life, unless morphine is given to them, they are very apt to suffer collapse, and this condition may end in death, the child being too weak to withstand the violent symptoms, which are similar to those which follow the sudden withdrawal of the drug in adult opium-eaters.

Dr. A. Oemler, an authority on the oyster, who recently read a paper on the subject before the Georgia Historical Society, says: "Mud is the most formidable enemy of the oyster. Even if the water which passes through its gills or lungs is muddy, the little creature dies from asphyxia or suffocation. If, in its search for the homestead, upon which its life depends, it encounters a film of mud the thickness of a sheet of writing-paper, its fine, soft organs of locomotion being inadequate to free it from the engulfing medium, its course is run."

It is said that the makers of the big globe, which is now on exhibition in Paris, found it necessary to make parts of Africa over twice on account of important geographical news received from the Dark Continent. Some Belgian map-makers had a still livelier experience two years ago. They prepared a large map of the Congo State five times for the press, and withdrew it each time for additions and corrections. Mr. Habenicht, editor of a most notable map of Africa, says, in his preface to the second edition, that "the map of Africa is never completed, and that no mail arrives from the big continent without bringing new work for the map-makers."

The Pennsylvania Railroad Company is making experiments for the introduction of a force-pump and hose upon passenger locomotives for use in case of fire on board the train. It is hoped that the frightful burnings which often follow collisions and other accidents may in this way be avoided. The hose, which will extend about the distance of six cars, is carried upon the tender. It is also proposed to equip the train-hands fully and train them in a fire-drill. If the experiments are satisfactory, a number of locomotives will be equipped.—*Philadelphia American.*